

CLAIMS

We claim as our invention:

1. A method of electronic commerce comprising:
  - providing access to information related to a product to a prospective purchaser  
5 of the product via an information network;
  - receiving application specific information related to prospective use of the product from the prospective purchaser via the information network;
  - producing data responsive to the application specific information from the prospective purchaser and indicative of a calculated value of the product to the  
10 prospective purchaser arising from a prospective purchase and use of the product; and
  - communicating the data to the prospective purchaser via the information network.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - 15 calculating a return on investment parameter responsive to the application specific information; and
  - communicating the return on investment parameter to the prospective purchaser.
- 20 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising providing the data to the prospective purchaser via a graphical user interface using a color scheme responsive to a level of the return on investment parameter.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - 25 saving at least a portion of the application specific information; and
  - using the saved portion of the application specific information in a further product sales opportunity.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising querying the prospective  
30 purchaser via the information network regarding the prospective purchaser's interest in additional information regarding the product.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising querying the prospective purchaser via the information network regarding the prospective purchaser's desire to make a purchase.

5 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a graphical user interface for receiving application specific information from a prospective purchaser's data processor via the information network.

10 8. The method of claim 7, further comprising providing the data to the prospective purchaser via the graphical user interface in a print-ready format.

15 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the prospective purchaser is an operator of an off-highway mining vehicle, the product is an upgrade to the vehicle, and the application specific information comprises mine specific information including a total system operating cost without the upgrade, and further comprising:  
calculating a total system operation cost with the upgrade;  
subtracting the total system operating cost with the upgrade from the total system operating cost without the upgrade to obtain the total system operation savings; and  
20 communicating the total system operation savings to the operator.

10. A method of electronic commerce comprising:  
providing access to information related to a plurality of products to a prospective purchaser via an information network;  
25 receiving application specific information related to prospective use of at least two of the products from the prospective purchaser via the information network;  
producing data responsive to the application specific information from the prospective purchaser and indicative of calculated values of the products to a prospective purchaser arising from the prospective purchase and use of each of the at least two of the products; and  
30 communicating the data to the prospective purchaser via the global information network.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising:  
using the data to identify a recommended product to be purchased by the  
prospective purchaser; and  
communicating the recommendation to the prospective purchaser.

5 12. The method of claim 10, further comprising:  
providing an Internet web site containing information related to a plurality of  
vehicles;

receiving application specific information related to the prospective  
purchaser's projected use of a vehicle;

10 producing a return on investment parameter responsive to the application  
specific information for at least one of the plurality of vehicles; and  
communicating the return on investment parameter to the prospective  
purchaser via the information network.

15 13. The method of claim 12, further comprising receiving application  
specific information related to the terrain over which the prospective purchaser  
anticipates use of a vehicle.

14. A method of electronic commerce comprising:  
20 providing access to information related to a product to a prospective purchaser  
of the product via an information network;  
receiving application specific information related to prospective use of the  
product from the prospective purchaser via the information network;  
producing data responsive to the application specific information from the  
25 prospective purchaser and indicative of a calculated value of the product to the  
prospective purchaser arising from a prospective purchase and use of the product;  
communicating the data to the prospective purchaser; and  
using the application specific information to identify a further sales  
opportunity.

15. A method of electronic commerce comprising:
  - providing access to information related to a locomotive upgrade product to a prospective purchaser via an information network;
  - receiving railway specific information related to prospective use of a locomotive utilizing the locomotive upgrade product from the prospective purchaser via the information network;
  - producing a return on investment parameter responsive to the railway specific information from the prospective purchaser and indicative of a calculated value of the product to the prospective purchaser arising from a prospective purchase and use of the locomotive upgrade product; and
  - communicating the return on investment parameter to the prospective purchaser via the information network.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising:
  - providing access to information related to at least two locomotive upgrade products to the prospective purchaser via the information network;
  - producing return on investment parameters responsive to the railway specific information related to a prospective purchase and use of each of the at least two locomotive upgrade products; and
  - communicating the parameters to the prospective purchasers.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising:
  - using the return on investment parameters to identify a recommended locomotive upgrade product; and
  - communicating the recommended locomotive upgrade product to the prospective purchaser via the information network.

18. A method of electronic commerce comprising:
  - providing access to information related to a locomotive upgrade product to a prospective purchaser via an information network;
  - receiving railway specific information related to prospective use of a locomotive utilizing the locomotive upgrade product from the prospective purchaser via the information network;
  - producing a fuel savings parameter for the locomotive upgrade product responsive to the railway specific information from the prospective purchaser; and
  - communicating the fuel savings parameter to the prospective purchaser via the information network.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
  - receiving railway specific terrain profile information from the prospective purchaser; and
  - producing the fuel savings parameter responsive to the railway specific terrain profile information.

20. A method of electronic commerce comprising:
  - providing access to information related to a product to a prospective purchaser via an Internet web site;
  - requesting application specific information related to prospective use of the product from the prospective purchaser via the Internet web site;
  - providing default data for a portion of the application specific information for which the prospective purchaser need not provide application specific data;
  - producing value data responsive to the application specific information and indicative of a calculated value of the product to the prospective purchaser arising from purchase and use of the product; and
  - communicating the value data to the prospective purchaser via the Internet site.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising:

presenting a plurality of pull-down menus to the prospective purchaser via the Internet web site to facilitate communication of the application specific information; and

5 providing default data for each of the pull-down menus.

22. The method of claim 20, further comprising presenting the value data via the Internet web site using a color scheme wherein the color of a display corresponds to a numeric magnitude of the value data.

10 23. A method of electronic commerce between a prospective purchaser who manages a fleet of vehicles and a supplier of equipment, the method comprising:

a supplier providing access to product information related to at least one product for prospective use in the fleet of vehicles via an information network;

a prospective purchaser providing fleet information specific to a fleet of vehicles to the supplier;

15 the supplier producing data responsive to the fleet information and indicative of a calculated value of the product to the prospective purchaser arising from a perspective purchase and use of the at least one product for at least one vehicle in the fleet; and

20 the supplier communicating the data to the prospective purchaser via the information network.

24. The method of claim 23, further comprising:

the supplier producing a plurality of data sets responsive to the fleet information and related to respective alternative values to the prospective purchaser arising from purchase and use of a respective alternative plurality of at least one product for at least one vehicle in the fleet; and

25 the supplier using the plurality of data sets to identify a recommended purchase; and

30 the supplier communicating the recommended purchase to the prospective purchaser via the information network.

25. An apparatus for conducting electronic commerce comprising:  
a supplier data processor having access to data related to a plurality of  
products and having access to an information network;

5        a prospective purchaser data processor having access to the information  
network for displaying the data related to the products and for providing to the  
supplier data processor application specific data related to prospective use of at least  
one of the products by the prospective purchaser;  
            program instructions executable by the supplier data processor to generate  
10      value data responsive to the application specific data and representing a calculated  
value to the prospective purchaser arising from a prospective purchase and use of the  
at least one of the products.

26. A machine-readable data storage medium encoded with a set of  
15      machine-executable instructions for using a data processing system to perform a  
method for conducting electronic commerce, the method comprising:  
            providing access to information related to a product to a prospective purchaser  
of the product via an information network;  
            receiving application specific information related to prospective use of the  
20      product from the prospective purchaser via the information network;  
            producing data responsive to the application specific information and  
indicative of a calculated value of the product to the prospective purchaser arising  
from a prospective purchase and use of the product; and  
            communicating the data to the prospective purchaser.

27. A method of electronic commerce comprising:
- providing an Internet web site for the exchange of information related to a plurality of locomotive products;
- obtaining information related to an existing locomotive owned by a prospective purchaser via the Internet web site;
- 5 providing a list of potential replacement locomotives to the prospective purchaser via the Internet web site, the list of potential replacement locomotives being responsive to the existing locomotive information;
- calculating a value parameter comparing each of the potential replacement 10 locomotives to the existing locomotive, the value parameter comprising at least one of a fuel savings parameter, a replacement ratio, and an increased tonnage opportunity; and
- communicating the value parameters to the prospective purchasers via the Internet web site.
- 15 28. The method of claim 27, further comprising:
- receiving railroad specific duty cycle information from the prospective purchaser via the Internet web site; and
- calculating a fuel savings parameter responsive to the railroad specific duty cycle information.

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